

C. Randal Mills named as new President of California's Stem Cell Agency

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San Francisco, CA – Describing him as a "visionary and highly regarded scientific and business leader" the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), the state's stem cell agency, today appointed C. Randal Mills, Ph.D., as its new President and Chief Executive Officer.

Mills, the former President and CEO of Osiris Therapeutics, was selected by the agency's governing Board, the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC). The Board said one of the key factors behind their choice was that under Mills' leadership Osiris became the first company to commercialize a stem cell drug, Prochymal, used for the treatment of acute graft-vs-host disease in children, a devastating complication of bone marrow transplantation that can be fatal.

"It is a tremendous honor to be selected to lead the world's largest stem cell institute during such an exciting and pivotal time for the technology," says Mills. "We are entering a new phase in regenerative medicine, where an increasing number of therapies are heading into clinical trials. It is our mission to do everything possible to accelerate the development of these treatments for the patients who need them."

"To say we are delighted to have Randy take over as President is an understatement," says Jonathan Thomas, J.D., Ph.D., Chairman of the stem cell agency's governing Board. "We were looking for someone with the leadership skills and personality to manage a very complex organization, someone who will be a strong voice and a visible champion for all that we do. In Randy we have found that person. He is a well respected scientist whose experience and expertise will ensure we will continue to be a world leader in stem cell research."

Mills was hired after a worldwide search for a new President. The agency hired a highly regarded executive search company, Korn Ferry, to help with the task; it put together a Presidential Search Subcommittee; drew up a long list of requirements it wanted in a candidate; sifted through dozens of applications, that came from both academia and industry, and narrowed it down to 7 people to interview in person.

Dr. Anthony Atala, Director of the Institute for Regenerative Medicine at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, says that process helped them arrive at the perfect choice.

"Over the years, what has impressed me most about Randy is the consistent sense of urgency he has towards helping patients in need. Those of us who work in this field know that the potential of regenerative medicine is enormous. However, Randy has demonstrated the unique ability to turn that potential into reality. He will make a great President at CIRM and will keep the organization focused on developing and delivering stem cell-based technologies that improve patients' lives."

Mills, a member of the stem cell agency's Grant Review Board for the past five years, was at Osiris for almost ten years before stepping down last December. Prior to that he served in several executive leadership roles with RTI Biologics Inc, and was a founding member of that company's predecessor, the University of Florida Tissue Bank. He also served, at the appointment of the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, as a voting member of the National Institutes of Health and AIDS Research Advisory Council and was vice chairman of the American Association of Tissue Bank's Standards Committee.

Mills has a bachelor's degree in microbiology and cell science, and a Ph.D. in drug development, from the University of Florida.

He will replace Alan Trounson, Ph.D., who is stepping down after six years to spend more time with his family in Australia.

About CIRM: CIRM was established in November 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research.

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